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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 001532

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SUBJECT: GUINEA: DAS FITZGERALD'S CONSULTATIONS IN PARIS
(NOVEMBER 16)

REF: A. PARIS 1465

1B. OUAGADOUGOU 987

Classified By: Andrew Young, Political Counselor, reason 1.4 (b and d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: French officials at the MFA and Presidency were in general agreement with AF DAS William Fitzgerald November 16 on the need for a change in leadership in Guinea, but they also agreed that effecting change, making sure Dadis steps down, and identifying a suitable replacement government were difficult challenges. They thought that the mediation effort of Burkina Faso President Compaore could offer a solution but wondered whether Compaore would move fast enough and whether he might devise a formula that could include Dadis in a future government, which would be difficult to accept. The French said they would continue to discuss the matter with Compaore and would also continue to try to find a country willing to offer Dadis exile. The two sides also discussed the possibility of establishing an observer force, drawn from ECOWAS, that could be deployed in Guinea as a stabilizing influence, with Nigeria a possible major contributor to such a force. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) AF DAS William Fitzgerald on November 16 met separately with MFA AF A/S-equivalent Stephane Gompertz and desk officer Ann'laure Hare (with Africa Watcher attending) and, at the Presidency, with Deputy Diplomatic Advisor Andre Parant and AF-advisor Remi Marechaux (with Africa Assistant attending).

MFA'S GOMPERTZ -- WILL DADIS DEPART?

13. (C) With Gompertz and Hare, DAS Fitzgerald underscored a number of immediate priorities: the need to gain a better understanding of the apparent build-up of troops affiliated with CNDD President Dadis Camara, to expose whatever outside training assistance Dadis is receiving for these new troops (there are credible reports of South African and Israeli trainers in Guinea), and to verify arms shipments arriving in Guinea. Gompertz confirmed that he had seen similar reports through French channels. DAS Fitzgerald noted the significant funds that are available to the junta, including the USD 100 million-plus "security deposit" from the Chinese International Fund (CIF), USD 20 million per quarter from SAG for its gold mining concession, and new resources as a result of the Russian Aluminum company RUSAL's recent agreement with the junta allowing the restart of its operations.

14. (C) Gompertz noted that EU financial sanctions against junta leaders were working their way through the process, but that the big hole in the sanctions regime is Morocco. Gompertz will be travelling to the kingdom on November 17 and planned to ask Rabat to join the sanctions regime. Gompertz hopes that the U.S. will deliver the same message. On this trip, Gompertz will also travel to South Africa and he

promised to raise the issue of South African military trainers with Pretoria.

¶ 15. (C) Gompertz agreed with DAS Fitzgerald that we need to work together to convince Nigeria to provide personnel to an observation force similar to the force deployed in 2005 in Togo. France believes the UN Commission of Inquiry will arrive in Conakry on November 16, is expected to complete its work by December 5 and report back by December 16.

¶ 16. (C) While stating that "another problem is that Dadis is crazy," Gompertz wondered what can be done about the current situation. He noted that Defense Minister Sekouba Konate (who was recently in Paris to discuss reforming Guinea's military) may be distancing himself from Dadis and agreed that security chief Claude Pivi might be moving in Konate's direction. However, Compaore is determined to keep negotiations alive, which favors Dadis. Fitzgerald and Gompertz agreed that it is difficult to get any readout from Compaore because he operates in such a guarded manner, although Gompertz noted that French officials have had some luck getting information from one of Compaore's close associates, Colonel-Major Gilbert Diendere.

¶ 17. (C) Gompertz noted that there are troubling signs that Guinea's opposition Forces Vives coalition is starting to splinter, a development that would be "game over" in favor of Dadis. Appearing somewhat uncomfortable with the idea, Gompertz also floated the possibility of a transitional government that includes Dadis, perhaps with Sekouba Konate as PM,, citing recent examples of Kenya and Zimbabwe -- also led by "murderers" -- where an unpalatable leadership has

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been accepted as an intermediary step. DAS Fitzgerald pointed out a number of differences in these situations, including the military-led brutality of Guinea's attacks on peaceful protesters as well as the fact that Presidents Kibaki and Mugabe had been initially installed as legitimate leaders.

Meeting at the Presidency (Parant and Marechaux)

¶ 18. (C) Parant began by recounting his consultations in Ouagadougou on November 3 (reftels). He said that Forces Vives leaders and Compaore were not in synch -- the former wanted a way forward that excluded Dadis and his cronies from the beginning, with a discussion of transitional structures, elections, and new leadership to follow, whereas as Compaore favored a discussion of the latter subjects (which suggested the possibility of Dadis's remaining as part of a transition) before addressing issues related to Dadis's future. Parant said the opposition did not at all favor Compaore's approach.

¶ 19. (C) DAS Fitzgerald noted the often splintered nature of the opposition, with some members probably willing to work with Dadis. In any case, the USG considered Dadis unacceptable. There was movement, with the UN group investigating the September 28 massacre soon to arrive in country. We needed to keep pressure on Dadis, to consider approaching Morocco again in terms of sanctions (in view of the presence there of Dadis's wealth and members of his family) and as a possible point of exile for Dadis, and to consider a possible ECOWAS observer mission, with Nigeria playing a lead role. Parant remarked that his predecessor as Deputy Diplomatic Advisor, Bruno Joubert, had recently arrived in Rabat as Ambassador to Morocco and would be adept at managing the Guinea issue in Morocco.

¶ 10. (C) DAS Fitzgerald noted troubling indications that Dadis was building an ethnic-based militia force, with the possible inclusion of trainers from South Africa and Israel. This militia force apparently also included child soldiers and was possibly receiving equipment from Libya (or else eastern European arms transiting Libya). Revenue from China and gold mining operations was enough to cover these arms

expenditures. Parant said that the GOF had obtained similar information about Dadis's militia forces.

¶11. (C) Parant then raised what he considered the key problematic issues: How to convince Dadis to leave, finding a country that would take him as an exile (with Morocco again mentioned as a possibility), and the question of "what comes after," should Dadis be persuaded to go. Parant observed that the issue of guaranteeing Dadis some sort of immunity from later prosecution, as part of a deal resulting in his leaving power, would have to be addressed, difficult as that might be. The Charles Taylor case was not a good precedent insofar as it would loom large in Dadis's likely calculations. Parant said that another issue would involve delivering the message to Dadis, i.e., presenting to him the deal that would have to include his departure from power. Parant and DAS Fitzgerald said that the best messenger would likely be a francophone African leader such as Jean Ping.

¶12. (C) As for what might come after, Parant and DAS Fitzgerald agreed that the Guinean army would likely play an important role in any transition, along with any outside observer force that might be deployed to serve as a stabilizing force after Dadis's departure and during a transition phase. They agreed that there were elements in the army that seemed trustworthy, although there would always be a certain amount of risk involved in placing faith in any army personnel or faction. Sekouba Konate was again mentioned as a military figure with whom the opposition might be able to work, an impression Parant said he had when he met with the opposition in Ouagadougou.

¶13. (C) The meeting ended with Parant and DAS Fitzgerald promising to keep in close contact over Guinea.

¶14. (U) DAS Fitzgerald has cleared this message.

¶15. (U) Conakry and Tripoli minimize considered.
PEKALA